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Understanding the Educational Process of Victim Impact Panels

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&
Carrie Robbins
Program Specialist, Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD)

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ARIZONA PROSECUTING ATTORNEYS' ADVISORY COUNCIL
3838 N. Central Ave., Suite 850
Phoenix, Arizona 85012

ELIZABETH BURTON ORTIZ
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Contemporary Justice Review, 2013
Vol. 16, No. 1, 43–69, http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10282580.2013.769305

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

Teaching restorative justice: developing a restorative andragogy for face-to-face, online and hybrid course modalities

Michael J. Gilbert[a]*, Mara Schiff[b] and Rachel H. Cunliffe[c]

[a]*Department of Criminal Justice, University of Texas at San Antonio, San Antonio, TX, USA;* [b]*Department of Criminal Justice, Florida Atlantic University, Boca Raton, FL, USA;* [c]*Conflict Resolution, Portland State University, Portland, OR, USA*

(*Received 2 March 2012; final version received 31 May 2012*)

Teaching restorative justice in an academic setting is different from teaching almost any other academic course. Courses taught in the context of academic criminal justice programs tend to reinforce the structural inequalities in society, replicated and reinforced by instructor driven classroom experiences. In contrast, effective teaching of restorative justice should emulate the values of principles of restorative justice in the organization and management of the course. Teachers of restorative justice must 'walk the talk' and apply restorative principles and values to the design and delivery of the course itself. A conceptual framework for 'restorative andragogy' is developed that blends principles and values of adult learning with those of restorative justice. Four principles of this approach are identified and applied across three instructional modalities – face-to-face, online only, and hybrid courses. This approach provides a theoretically grounded model for effective teaching of restorative justice courses.

Keywords: restorative justice; adult learning; andragogy; restorative andragogy

Introduction

Restorative justice (RJ) is a non-traditional philosophy of justice that views crimes as harms to people and relationships rather than as violations of law. From this perspective, justice is not an offender centered process to determine guilt and impose sanctions as in the traditional punitive justice model. Rather, restorative justice is victim-centered and concerned with healing harms, repairing relationships, ensuring accountability, creating opportunities to make amends, making earned redemption possible, and improving social conditions. This conceptualization of justice may reduce future offending by changing the values and behaviors of offenders, while also providing a stronger sense of safety for crime victims and improving social conditions (Zehr, 1990, 2002, 2005). Over the last two decades, restorative justice has gained increased support as a credible and viable alternative to traditional justice processes (Umbreit & Armour, 2010), and mounting research suggests that non-traditional healing dialogue can produce meaningful forms of justice for both victims and offenders (Umbreit, Coates, & Vos, 2001, 2002a, 2002b).

*Corresponding author. Email: michael.gilbert@utsa.edu

Increasing interest and evidence of the efficacy of RJ has led to general acceptance of this subfield within criminal justice and criminology and RJ courses are now common in these degree programs. However, the content of RJ courses is generally unsuitable for traditional instructor-centered teaching strategies (didactic lectures). While those strategies may be suitable for disseminating cognitive knowledge (theory, research findings, techniques), RJ courses deal with emotional issues related to victimization and offending, and our understanding of who constitutes a 'victim' or an 'offender.' Moreover, RJ relies heavily on building and engaging community, which should be modeled in an RJ classroom. This paper argues that effective RJ instruction goes beyond traditional classroom methods by modeling the values and principles inherent in RJ processes. We offer a new way of thinking about teaching RJ based on principles of andragogy, or the theory and practice of adult education, and propose that a new 'Restorative Andragogy' is essential to facilitate true understanding and the experience of restorative justice. We discuss how this can be accomplished and suggest strategies for effectively modeling restorative andragogy in traditional face-to-face classes, online courses and blended, or hybrid courses that mix face-to-face and online strategies.

Andragogy and pedagogy: two perspectives on teaching and learning

A common construct for understanding 'learning' refers to individual processes that result in modifications of earlier understandings, or the acquisition of new knowledge, perceptions or skills. Each iterative advance in learning involves integrating previous knowledge with new concepts and ideas. Learning can take place almost anywhere – formally in the classroom, or informally in the community, in families, among friends or through everyday life experiences (Verner, 1964). At its best, education is a formal experience structured and sequenced to convey intellectual knowledge (cognitive domain), develop emotional awareness and empathy (affective domain), and/or build physical skills (psychomotor domain) (Bloom, Englehardt, Furst, Hill, & Krathwohl, 1956; Harrow, 1972; Krathwohl, 2002; Krathwohl, Bloom & Masia, 1964; Simpson, 1972; Verner, 1964). However, education is also about integrating these three domains of knowledge into creative ways of being in the world (Zull, 2011). Effective restorative justice teaching relies on the integration of these domains to communicate about relevant and creative responses to harm.

The term 'pedagogy' refers to formal instructional methods used by teachers to educate students. However, the origin of the term is explicitly focused on instructor driven methods used with children (Knowles, 1984; Taylor & Kroth, 2009). While pedagogical approaches are often applied to adults, the underlying assumptions refer to children. These assumptions include the notion that learners have little relevant experience, little or no knowledge of the subject and passively depend on the instructor to impart knowledge. Moreover, learning readiness is relatively uniform based on age, and motivation is driven by extrinsic pressures and rewards from parents, teachers or concerns about their future (Knowles, 1984; Purcell, 2010).

These assumptions are questionable even for children, but when applied to adults become quite problematic. Knowles (1984), one of the most influential theorists of adult education of the twentieth century, constructed a framework for understanding instructional approaches most likely to be effective with adults. Termed 'andragogy,' it assumes that: adults are capable of self-directed learning; adult readiness to learn depends on maturity; past educational and life experiences provide a

rich contextual framework for learning; adults seek learning experiences related to their life circumstances and social roles; adult interests tend to be problem centered and they seek learning experiences related to these problems; and, adults are motivated by intrinsic needs rather than extrinsic pressures or rewards (Knowles, 1984; Merriam, 2001; Purcell, 2010).

While it is tempting to view pedagogy and andragogy as being mutually exclusive, Knowles (1984) notes that these two perspectives represent a continuum that overlaps particularly with immature, dependent adults or mature, independent children. Yet, the larger point is that instructors of adults should not, as a general rule, employ instructional techniques that treat adults as children. Knowles (1984) further argues that effectively teaching adults consists of a number of key elements that amount to principles of instructional design, including:

- *Principle 1*: Create an environment conducive to communication, using a circle when possible;
- *Principle 2*: Create a psychological climate based on mutual respect, collaborative learning, mutual trust, supportiveness, openness and authenticity, joy in learning and self-discovery, acceptance and humanness;
- *Principle 3*: Involve students in planning, determining learning needs and assessment methods;
- *Principle 4*: Share responsibility for learning objectives, learning plans, learning assessment and the classroom environment.

In the criminal justice context, Birzer and Tannehill (2001) proposed the use of instructional methods based on andragogy as the foundation for more effective police training. Compared to traditional law enforcement training, they argued that these new approaches would closely approximate the realities of police work and produce graduates who are better prepared and more proficient to deal with the complexities of law enforcement. In one police department, the entire command structure is rethinking police leadership, management and training in fundamental ways consistent with principles of andragogy. If the principles and practices of andragogy can be incorporated within militarized, bureaucratic and hierarchal law enforcement training, perhaps similar resistance within higher education could be overcome and yield improved learning outcomes (Birzer, 2004; Purcell, 2010).

This article is based on the fundamental assertion that teaching RJ is 'different' from teaching in most university or college criminal justice courses. The principles and practices of andragogy (i.e. embracing the perspectives of participants, sharing responsibility for outcomes, collaborating on evaluation of process and products) are highly consistent with the values, principles, and practices of restorative justice, which should be modeled in the classroom to be taught effectively. In short, teaching RJ suggests that *'restorative andragogy'* modeled on the values and principles of adult learning and restorative justice would maximize teaching effectiveness. We explore the concept of restorative andragogy, which could be applied to any class. We also examine how restorative andragogy may be employed with three distinct teaching modalities: the traditional classroom, the online course and the hybrid course (electronic and face-to-face instruction).

Moving toward 'restorative andragogy'

Despite its increasing academic and practical acceptance, criminal justice (CJ) curricula provide limited attention to RJ programs or processes, and rarely encourage a different teaching style. Rather, such degree programs focus on traditional jurisprudential philosophies that emphasize individual rather than collective responsibility for outcomes, and individualized punishment as a response to harm, misbehavior or rule-breaking. For example, correctional approaches taught in CJ degree programs (e.g. retribution, incapacitation, deterrence or rehabilitation) typically focus on the offender as the object of intervention, where official condemnation is imposed on passively involved and barely engaged offenders with some measure of legal and jurisprudential 'objectivity'. Furthermore, victims are sidelined unless they are needed as witnesses by prosecutors, and collective responsibility to address underlying social issues is ignored (Kaplan, 2012).

What attracts many people to traditional correctional models is that each resonates with some aspect of our cultural identity, which thrives on isolating and dominating individual outliers (i.e. offenders), identifying and separating the 'good' from the 'bad,' and communicating social censure through 'objectively' determined punitive consequences for behavior. This traditional pattern of response to harm tends to further discriminate against already marginalized populations that are pre-identified as undesirable or 'bad' which, in the American context, often means people of color and/or low socio-economic status. The impact of current justice and correctional strategies on minorities and other disempowered populations is now well documented as such populations are forced disproportionately deeper into an inequitable justice system (Alexander, 2010; Cabaniss, Frabutt, Kendrick, & Arbuckle, 2007; Cole, 1999; Huizinga, Thornberry, Knight, & Lovegrove, 2007; Kakar, 2006; Rodriguez, 2007; Walker, Spohn, & DeLone, 2007).

In contrast, restorative approaches contextualize crimes and humanize those involved through direct accountability and stakeholder stories, both of which increase awareness of the social conditions associated with street crimes. In this way traditional criminal justice perspectives are expanded from individual to collective responsibility, including ways to heal harms and address social justice inequities.

Supplementing criminal justice processes with restorative justice programs attempts to balance power and foster inclusion, particularly of victims, in responses to criminalized harm (Zehr, 2005). Although in the US these approaches are mostly restricted to relatively minor harms, we are beginning to see restorative justice interventions used more broadly with serious cases (Gustafson, 2005; Rugge & Cormier, 2005; Umbreit, Vos, Coates, & Brown, 2003; Vanfraechem, 2005). From this perspective, the CJ curriculum in higher education cannot be complete without covering restorative justice.

Restorative justice cannot truly be understood from abstract intellectual familiarity with its theory and principles through a traditional instructor-centered course. To gain a deep understanding of RJ it must be directly experienced by students. Moreover, the set of values that accord with RJ philosophy and practices often stand in direct contrast to those promoted in traditional CJ processes. As such, adoption of restorative andragogy into both CJ degree curricula and RJ classrooms achieves at least two objectives: first, students going into 'law and order' occupations will have been exposed to RJ strategies in their education; secondly, such

students will develop skills enabling them to engage in and understand restorative encounters and research, which should empower them to undertake innovative leadership roles within the justice workforce.

Most CJ graduates will enter a justice system that increasingly supplements CJ with RJ but with minimal exposure to the content and style of values-based leadership and collaboration required to model and lead RJ successfully. We would argue that, in order to fully understand the justice paradigm under which RJ operates, students *must* personally experience it in the classroom. Introducing restorative andragogy as an instructional framework into a traditional criminal justice curriculum will allow students to experience RJ processes first hand, in the classroom, and help them acquire skills in conflict resolution, power balancing, listening and collaboration which they will need throughout a professional career in justice related fields. Moreover, such exposure is likely to create future criminal justice leaders and practitioners inclined to promote innovative approaches to justice questions.

Understanding principles of restorative justice

In order to effectively emulate and teach RJ values and principles in the classroom, it is essential to first understand the basic tenets of restorative justice. These principles are grounded in the fundamental idea that crime is harm that violates individuals, relationships, and communities and is much more than simply a violation of law. Such violations 'create obligations to make things right' (Zehr, 1990, p. 181) and 'justice' requires more than simply punishing, or treating, lawbreakers. Instead, a *restorative* response to crime, harm, and/or conflict seeks to 'do justice' by repairing the harm crime caused to victims, offenders and community. To the greatest extent possible, such repair involves rebuilding relationships damaged by crime and other conflicts. Achieving justice in a restorative way invites stakeholders to hold offenders or rule-breakers accountable, not by asking them to 'take the punishment,' but rather by ensuring that they take *responsibility* through acknowledging their part in the harm, and making amends to their victims and the community.

A restorative justice response to harm includes two primary components: (1) a non-adversarial, dialogue-based, decision making process that allows stakeholders to discuss the harm done to victims, while considering the needs of all participants; and (2) an agreement for going forward based on the input of these stakeholders about what is needed to repair the harm to the persons and community harmed (Bazemore & Schiff, 2010). Underpinning these processes is the transformation of the relationships among stakeholders. Some restorative justice programs, such as facilitated dialogue[1], may emphasize the process of transformation over the outcome of reparation, but the principles are the same: the allocation of responsibility, the acceptance of obligations, and the move toward healing.

The strength and integrity of a restorative intervention is determined by the degree of adherence to core principles ('fidelity') which prioritize the following objectives: (1) reparation of the harm to victim, community, offenders and their families; (2) involvement of each stakeholder in the discussion of the incident and in the plan for repair; and (3) transformation of community and government roles so that communities have a greater voice and increased responsibility for responding to conflict, while agencies of the justice system assume more facilitative roles (Christie, 1977; Gilbert & Settles, 2007; Pranis, 2001; Van Ness & Strong, 2010).

Ideally, restorative justice practice is a 'problem-oriented' approach to justice (Eck & Spelman, 1987; Goldstein, 1990) which draws on the strengths of collective prevention and intervention (Bazemore & Boba, 2007). This is in sharp contrast to traditional justice practices that are centralized, incident-focused and reactive rather than preventive. In schools, as Riestenberg (2007, p. 10) asserts:

> A restorative philosophy emphasizes problem-solving approaches …, attends to the social/emotional as well as the physical/intellectual needs of students, recognizes the importance of the group to establish and practice agreed-upon norms and rules, and emphasizes prevention and early restorative intervention to create safe learning environments.

Despite the focus on RJ in secondary schools as a response to school discipline, the issues highlighted by this quote are remarkably consistent with both the principles of andragogy (Knowles, 1984, pp. 14–16) and the learning environment most suitable for restorative justice courses.

In addition to the key principles of repairing harm, stakeholder inclusion and shifting community-government relationships described above (Bazemore & Schiff, 2005; Van Ness & Strong, 2010), at its heart, restorative justice is deeply grounded in five fundamental values from the field of social work (Umbreit & Armour, 2010, pp. 40–63):

- *Service* – voluntarism, sharing authority and responsibility.
- *Social Justice* – challenging injustices and social inequalities; including and, empowering marginalized populations; providing ways for victims to attain vindication and, offenders to earn redemption; improving social conditions that lead to offending behavior.
- *Respect the Dignity and Worth of the Person* – using fair processes that ensure equal opportunity for expression and listening; addressing people as whole human beings; understanding the social context of human behavior; recognizing the possibility of personal transformation; encouraging self-determination through participation, setting agendas, and identifying issues; and engendering a sense of social obligation.
- *Importance of Human Relationships* – recognizing that human connection is central to a peaceful community; building constructive and trusting relationships based on shared experiences.
- *Integrity* – trustworthiness, honesty and frankness in interactions with others; dialogue processes that are fair, respectful, open; encouraging truth telling, making amends, and changed behavior.

Based on these values, justice takes on a markedly different appearance. Instead of marginalizing victims, it empowers and focuses on healing the harms they have suffered. Instead of establishing legal guilt, it focuses on the obligation to repair harms. Instead of assigning blame, it seeks personal accountability for harms caused. Instead of imposition of sanctions, it seeks voluntary acts by offenders to right their wrongs. Instead of isolating and marginalizing offenders, it seeks to involve and engage them in the life of the community, and thereby earn their own redemption.

To effectively teach such fundamental values shifts, instructors must simultaneously challenge their own values and confront their own vulnerability in order to encourage such awareness among students. It also requires a teaching style that is participatory, inclusive, flexible, reflective, and respectful combined with timely feedback to students. These instructional practices are distinct from the comfortable traditions of instructor-centered pedagogy characteristic of academic institutions.

Integrating RJ principles in the classroom experience

Teaching style and content

Traditional criminal justice teaching styles tend to replicate the justice models about which we teach and often reflect societal values about how to treat those who do harm and those who have been harmed. Traditional instructional strategies are hierarchical power structures where teachers dominate students through limiting and structuring participation and relying heavily on one-sided lectures and knowledge flows from teacher to student. Where there are discussions, these may be solely to confirm acquisition of new knowledge and understanding, rather than to admit new voices and perspectives. In RJ, it is important to access aspects of students' capacity to learn that are not directed exclusively by their intellectual capacity, but also by their feelings as emotional beings. In the traditional higher education environment, as in the traditional justice system, this is anathema. The experience of many, perhaps most, learners in traditional higher education has been one of being seen rather than heard; where their opinions and experiences are marginalized; and, where the professor's voice is the one most worth hearing. As a result, some students become comfortable in a passive learning role and may have a hard time adapting to a class where they are equally responsible for generating the content and structure of the course. Ironically, this is not dissimilar to the discomfort stakeholders may experience in RJ encounters when they are accustomed to the courtroom where the only voices that matter are those of the judge and representative attorneys, and other stakeholders sit passively on the sidelines. Rather like ‘unlearning’ the traditional justice process in order to understand the values and principles of RJ, students in the RJ class must ‘unlearn’ their traditional higher education expectations and experiences in order to experience the full capacity of the restorative process.

Teaching RJ requires moving away from teaching techniques that replicate the cultural insensitivities and inequalities reflected in justice strategies and institutions. In western jurisprudential culture, power differentials reinforce social inequalities through laws, regulations, and institutions and mostly penalize poor and marginalized populations. Despite the cultural rhetoric of equality and merit, social inequalities are most clearly demarcated by race, ethnicity and class. Underlying stereotypes and myths about ‘dangerous classes’ of people (young, poor, minority) have been used to dehumanize the ‘other’ and provide the rationale for punitive policies that mostly affect poor people of color (Alexander, 2010; Cole, 1999; Walker et al., 2007).

Yet, these traditional responses ignore the differences between *communities of fate* – people brought together involuntarily by shared circumstances of life (Heller, 1997); and, *communities of choice* – people brought together voluntarily by shared preferences (Goldsmith, 2000). The criminal law and the criminal justice system are designed and operated by people whose lives are mostly characterized by voluntary

participation in communities of choice. Conversely, the enforcement of laws is often most strongly experienced by those whose lives are highly constrained by limited life options (i.e. impoverished and marginalized communities of fate). These structural dynamics often lead to fear, suspicion and dehumanization of the 'other' and set the stage for quick-fix, punitive approaches to justice policy where the powerful (i.e. communities of choice) make critical decisions affecting the lives of the powerless who live in communities of fate (Chiricos, Welch, & Gertz, 2004). In this climate, punitive responses to crime resonate deeply for many citizens and represent a substantial hurdle to overcome for restorative justice educators. From a traditional perspective of criminal justice, the use of informal mediated dialogue between victims and offenders to address harms to victims may be viewed as 'soft on crime' (Zehr, 2005, pp. 74–77).

In this context, it is possible that traditional criminal justice approaches may be iatrogenic – that is, they may replicate and produce more *injustice* than justice (Alexander, 2010; Beckett & Sasson, 2004; Cole, 1999; Currie, 1998; Robinson, 2005; Walker, 2006). It is possible that restorative justice education offers an important counterbalance to dominant criminal justice discourse, which reifies existing economic, political, and social power differentials that are replicated in the classroom. The core of any instructional strategy to overcome these challenges is to foster constructive learning communities and strong relationships among members. Both physical and cyber classrooms present opportunities to learn about and experience the kinds of human interactions necessary to foster respectful and committed social cohesion.

Focus on relationships

Restorative justice, and its andragogy, is distinguished by its central focus on relationships where repairing harm to relationships while addressing physical or emotional harm is paramount. This is grounded in the restorative obligation to 'make things right' suggested by exchange theory (e.g. Bazemore & Schiff, 2005; Molm & Cook, 1995), social support theory (Bazemore & Schiff, 2005; Cullen, 1994), 'healing dialogue' and associated concepts that move participants toward finding common ground, and perhaps empathy for one another's circumstances (Umbreit & Armour, 2010). In building a 'restorative andragogy,' a similar focus on relationships within the classroom is required. For restorative justice teachers to model andragogy within the context of a college level course they must develop personal, caring and supportive relationships within the classroom which emulate the experiences of real restorative justice encounters.

In recent years, 'community building' has emerged in restorative literature as a desired outcome, suggesting that restorative processes may be used to create 'social capital' through connecting community members and support groups (Bazemore & Schiff, 2005; Braithwaite & Roach, 2001; Gilbert & Settles, 2007). Such community-building seeks to promote trust by building relationships needed later for collective action and shared leadership. The theory of *collective efficacy* (Sampson, Raudenbush, & Earls, 1997; Sampson & Wilson, 1995) suggests that, as community members *practice* justice related decision making to address harm and repair, they are likely to learn strategies useful in resolving conflict, assisting crime victims, and exerting informal support and social control. They may also develop a sense of

ownership for the community's quality of life and become empowered to exercise shared leadership to improve social conditions.

In the classroom context, community building to promote collective efficacy takes on a different meaning. It suggests that students and professors in RJ courses must work together to develop the context of the class as well as its outcomes. This is especially challenging as the prevailing academic culture usually involves top-down, hierarchic and power-driven instructional approaches. Just as most citizens have turned over their responsibility for managing and achieving 'justice' to professional institutions, most college students have been trained through years of education to be neither involved in, nor responsible for, their own learning. Many prefer that professors tell them what to do, how to do it and whether or not it will be on the test (Purcell, 2010).

In place of traditional academic pedagogic approaches that minimize student participation, require rigid curriculum and testing strategies, and center all power in the teacher, restorative justice offers an opportunity for a more robust and collective andragogy in which both teachers and students are actively engaged in collaborative decision-making. Ultimately, restorative andragogy aims to help students to take *responsibility* for their own learning, rather than relying on their teacher and the institution to determine their fate. Sharing power in this way simultaneously models and practices restorative justice collaboration and allows reflection on barriers to change. This dynamic is precisely what RJ theorists and practitioners hope to achieve in the broader justice context.

Applying principles of andragogy to restorative justice using various course delivery modalities

Considering the discussion of relationships above, some may feel that RJ cannot be taught entirely online or by using hybrid (blended) learning approaches. However, Hummer, Sims, Wooditch and Salley (2010) suggest that in the current electronic culture (cell phones, social networking, text messaging, etc.) many students identify online mediums as the gateway to community, rather than an obstacle. Some evidence suggests that the quality of online dialogue depends on skillful moderation by the facilitator (Easton, 2003; Notar, Wilson & Montgomery, 2005). Other research suggests that the key to successful online dialogue depends on recognizing and accommodating students who learn in different ways (Newhouse, 2001; Lesniak & Hodes, 2000; Mayzer & DeJong, 2003). While many teachers did not mature in an electronic culture, this is the culture in which education now exists and new teaching styles are needed. Creating and sustaining relationships in the absence of face-to-face interaction is challenging. In RJ, this instructional complexity is exacerbated by having to present evolving and nontraditional subject matter while mastering both the medium *and* the material taught.

RJ can be taught using different instructional modalities. Many RJ courses are taught in traditional, *face-to-face* format where students and instructor physically meet in a classroom each week to engage in discussion and experiential exercises. Most course materials are also provided in physical form – syllabi, books, articles, and other materials are delivered in 'hard copy.' While the teacher has formal control of the course, students may participate in various ways and degrees in the ongoing management and delivery of the course. Such courses are typically *synchronous* – everyone meets together in the same space and time. If instructional

technology is used it is primarily for presentation and is incidental or supplemental to direct classroom interactions.

Another, far rarer, format is to teach RJ entirely online. There are a variety of names for online teaching and learning, including eLearning, Distance Learning and Distance Education (Chaves, 2009; Donavant, 2009). In this modality, students and teacher *never* meet face-to-face, and all interaction occurs in online 'cyberspace.' Teaching RJ or any course electronically typically involves using a Learning Management Systems (LMS) such as Blackboard, WebCT, Moodle, eCollege, or another platform to organize and impart information, promote discussion, manage group work, and create student assignments. In addition, other electronic sources (i.e. websites, video 'mashups', PowerPoint slides, academic articles, publisher designed software, etc.) may be accessed independently or from within the LMS. This model tends to rely more on teacher *facilitation*, rather than the teacher 'delivering' content and having central control over the course. These courses are generally *asynchronous*, meaning that students and teacher do not have to participate at the same time and can work at their own convenience within a specified time frame.

A third model, the hybrid class (also known as 'Web-Assisted' or 'blended') involves some portion of the course being taught online and/or electronic resources being used extensively to support and enhance the course. This could mean anything from posting course materials online while classes are taught in the classroom, to holding some number of classes electronically either synchronously or asynchronously, to using video-conferencing or other streaming technology to deliver the course. It may be that only one to two classes are held online, or half or more classes are electronically delivered.

Each of these models has been used successfully to teach RJ and demonstrate *restorative andragogy*. However, each comes with its own unique set of course management and content delivery benefits and challenges. In the following sections, we discuss issues and obstacles of each model for the development of restorative andragogy consistent with the unique challenges faced by teaching restorative justice. We conclude that each model has merit but must be adapted to address the needs, interests and capacity of students seeking to fully understand the restorative model.

Common considerations

There are a number of common considerations in teaching RJ courses irrespective of instructional modality. First, adult learners often approach education and training settings with heightened anxiety about their academic performance, capacity to fit into the academic environment, potential embarrassment in class, or ability to balance competing work, family and educational demands (Kasworm, 2008). Restorative andragogy encourages an instructor to recognize and alleviate such anxieties by building rapport and trust through modeling restorative values of openness, honesty, directness, and receptivity to requests for assistance. While these values are important in all courses, they are essential elements in RJ courses which require students and the instructor to engage interpersonally as well as academically. This means that in the restoratively taught RJ course there is a shared journey of self-discovery where all participants reveal much more of themselves than in a typical academic course.

Second, restorative andragogy requires the use of learner-centered instructional approaches. This means that teachers relinquish much of their traditional classroom

control. Ideally, instead of directing students, the teacher works collaboratively with students to establish or refine structural elements of the course (syllabus, learning goals and objectives, sequence of content and activities, assessment mechanisms) and special areas of interest. Open dialogue processes help create a democratic classroom environment based on mutuality, collaboration, respect and accountability. This challenges traditional views about how college courses should be taught and experienced. Giving up a degree of power and control while retaining accountability for the course can feel very risky for many, if not most, faculty. It requires a 'leap of faith' that learning outcomes will be achieved while enabling students to exercise considerable influence, even leadership, over the structure and content of the course.

Third, in courses that employ restorative andragogy, students and their teachers are accountable to each other as people, rather than as professor and student. The standard power differentials between faculty and students are largely removed due to the shift in power relationships suggested above. Clearly, RJ instructors carry the initial responsibility for envisioning a course design that applies restorative andragogy and meets academic standards. In addition, teachers employing restorative andragogy must engage students in learner-centered activities that promote positive relationships, rapport and trust. However, these responsibilities should gradually shift during the first couple of weeks as students assume more of a leadership role. Students should be empowered to raise issues and concerns for discussion among class members (including the teacher), use dialogue processes and to employ consensus decision-making within the course. How this is accomplished may vary across instructional modalities and instructor preferences.

Fourth, the sense of a safe and shared learning community must be built among students and faculty. Each teaching modality has various opportunities and constraints which may require different techniques. Regardless of modality, the development of rapport, trust and safety to freely express ideas in the classroom moves gently from discussion of non-threatening issues to more difficult and sensitive issues. In each modality, a skilled teacher must facilitate discussions and model the values, principles, behaviors and practices that translate restorative justice theory into action. Students cannot be expected to courageously share aspects of their lives without modeling and encouragement by the teacher. Moreover, they cannot be expected to confront their own vulnerability if the teacher is unwilling to do so first. The most powerful learning in RJ courses often comes from the skillful combination of mental (thinking), physical (use of body language in role plays) and emotional awareness (accessing feelings). An in-depth RJ learning experience cannot be provided solely as an intellectual exercise. It requires that teachers be self-reflective and consider the balance between the right amount and too much/too little personal and academic information. It involves instructional skills and experiences that may, at times, resemble training facilitation more than traditional academic instruction. It goes beyond the intellectual domain where professors are most comfortable and may not easily be presented or measured. Some professors may not be well suited to this type of teaching, particularly if they think that emotion has no place in the classroom. In RJ courses emotion is an integral part of the learning experience.

Fifth, in practice, the process of finding meaningful forms of justice require that people talk with one another using a variety of genres and language skills as detailed below. This is equally true in the classroom where meaningful experience depends on similar techniques.

- *Story telling* helps individuals to understand and empathize with the human condition of others. Particularly critical in RJ classes are stories about victimization or offending experiences.
- *Active Listening* to the words, inflections, and body language used by a speaker supports understanding and interpretation of the speaker's meaning. In direct face-to-face interactions there are times when the words used are different from the speaker's intended meaning. Such nuanced interpretations are more difficult, but not impossible, with online dialogue.
- *Responding* in an appropriate and timely manner to verbal and non-verbal cues presented during interactions or online exchanges with affirmations, sympathy, or probes helps to reveal more information, give acknowledgment and recognition; or provide encouragement which conveys that the individual was heard and understood.
- *Reflecting* develops internalized understanding in ways that incorporates new information with existing knowledge, integrates facts and emotions, develops self-awareness and facilitates understanding. Reflection prompts can be used to encourage an inner dialogue from which knowledge emerges (e.g. 'Where and how do you practice restorative values in your life?'). Sometimes the anonymity or distance experienced by online students empowers them to be more willing to make disclosures which they might not in a classroom setting.

Finally, the number of students in each section of a restorative justice course must be manageable for the teacher, given the intense interpersonal communication skills needed to facilitate this type of learning experience. Face-to-face and hybrid courses may be somewhat smaller than online only courses because of physical requirements of circle processes; on the other hand, the intense interaction required to maintain communication in online classes may suggest class size limitations for adequate teacher engagement. This becomes especially complicated in times of fiscal austerity when college campuses strive to increase students while limiting faculty size and hiring. Since there are no universally applied standards for optimum course size in online courses they may become an easy target for expansion, especially as there is no physically imposed limits on class size. The need to provide the kind of individualized attention that empowers students to be vulnerable in an RJ course suggests that teachers should vigorously defend against over enrollment in these classes. Regardless of modality, instructors must be comfortable working where emotional content is as important as cognitive learning, and instructors must volunteer to lead such a course rather than be administratively assigned.

Principles of andragogy applied to RJ courses

In the following section, we address Knowles' (1984) principles and apply restorative andragogy to three instructional modalities to illustrate how such principles might be applied in practice.

Principle 1: Creating an environment conducive to communication

Face-to-face course

As face-to-face courses are standard classroom-based learning experiences where students meet at set times in a particular room, the physical features of the room

are important factors in creating an open, trusting environment suitable for deep reflection and sensitive interpersonal communication. For example, a room with fixed seating or tiered floors is not conducive to this type of course making it nearly impossible to conduct circle processes, simulations, small group discussions, or simultaneous role plays. Given the underlying values of restorative justice, flexible physical space is essential because an inappropriate classroom fosters an instructor-centered approach that reinforces power differentials and contradicts principles of adult learning and restorative justice (Knowles, 1984; Umbreit & Armour, 2010). Since the content of a restorative justice course is delivered through experiential exercises, the classroom must also be relatively free of external distractions.

In the face-to-face format, some class meetings may be conducted using a standard classroom set up with front facing rows of desk-chairs or tables (e.g. initial presentations of theory and principles). However, in most class meetings students will sit in a circle and face one another. The use of a circle facilitates, but does not ensure a safe space for students to engage in rich and intimate dialogue and limits the tendency for communication to be directed only to and from the instructor. The first few circle processes may be used to set normative ground rules for interaction and communication, identify shared interests, and define course elements such as assessment methods and content sequencing. These are relatively unthreatening substantive issues that enable an instructor to demonstrate restorative justice processes. The instructor's role is to facilitate these discussions while documenting the substantive issues and consensus decisions of students. Following these initial circles, dialogue sessions begin to move toward riskier topics that enable deeper insights into key restorative values, principles and processes. Using these structured processes establishes and implements the guidelines for a safe classroom environment that helps students develop rapport, trust and confidence in other students and in the instructor.

Online only course

Communication comprises a complex combination of verbal and non-verbal messages conveyed among participants who interact using a variety of modes beyond spoken language. The online facilitator must be aware of the nonverbal as well as the verbal elements of course communication and try to convey them online. For example, in face-to-face communication eye contact and nonverbal vocalizations, head nodding and so on indicate contingency and attention. Online, acknowledgement and timeliness in responding can convey attention to the elements of a student's message and emulate that of an attentive listener in a face-to-face environment. Moreover, informing a student when they can expect an instructor's response in the online environment is important to establishing clear communication. These practices are likely to foster trust between teaching and learner.

In online courses, creating a climate conducive to communication often starts before the course through advance email contacts. For example, professors may contact students several weeks before the course starts to begin establishing rapport, explain the expectations of participation in course design, and distribute a reading assignment prior to the first week of discussions. Students may be informed of an opportunity to collaboratively refine or build a syllabus tailored to their questions, concerns and interests. Collaborative development of the course syllabus is a deliberate strategy to share power and is consistent with the principles and values of both

andragogy and restorative justice (Knowles, 1984; Umbreit & Armour, 2010, p. 42). These approaches strive to replicate the healing, reparative and collaborative elements of community engagement using restorative principles and practices (Gilbert & Settles, 2007). Such early contacts help to establish rhythms and expectations of responsiveness between teacher and learners, and enable students to ask questions and become comfortable interacting with the teacher online. In combination, these initial contacts subtly convey the values of service, social justice, respect for the dignity and work of people, importance of human relationships, and integrity that underlie restorative justice.

Hybrid course

In the hybrid course environment, students initially meet one another in class and later online. For RJ, hybrid takes on an additional meaning as it is hybrid *both* in terms of course delivery modality (face-to-face and online), but also in terms of teaching style. That is, some of the course may be taught in a traditional lecture style information-dissemination format, while other parts may be taught using non-traditional modes, such as student directed learning, experiential exercises, kinesthetic approaches, and other strategies. The goal is to translate certain aspects of the face-to-face sessions (sitting in a circle, using a talking piece, ensuring that discussion is not directed to and from the instructor but rather is between and among students) smoothly into the electronic environment when the group meets online.

In a hybrid course, the classroom can be used as an experimental and experiential laboratory within which students and professor learn about each another as well as the subject. Classroom contact can help to build community that is maintained, and hopefully enhanced, in electronic meetings. In the classroom, students must access affective as well as cognitive learning domains when their notions of how a college classroom should look and what should happen within it are challenged (Bloom et al., 1956; Krathwohl, 2002; Krathwohl et al., 1964). One author's experience is that some students initially manage their physical vulnerability by hiding behind their laptops; some play with their hair and look down or away; others stare blankly or talk to their friends; a few like the exposure and opportunity to look directly at their peers. After a few weeks the circle becomes familiar, and generally by the end of the term most students have grown to prefer it. Students may comment about connecting with and finding friends in this class unlike any other college class in their experience, and that the notion of a ‘community’ became real for them unlike in other classes.

Principle 2: Creating a psychological climate based on mutual respect, collaborative learning, mutual trust, supportiveness, openness, authenticity, joy in learning, self-discovery, acceptance and humanness

Face-to-face course

Creating a classroom climate consistent with this principle is a gradual process. The first session or two may be used to develop a set of normative guidelines to govern interactions within the course. Topics are identified, debated, refined and approved by the students. For example, the following guidelines statement was developed in a face-to-face graduate course taught by one of the authors (Table 1):

Table 1. Guidelines.

What we expect from each other and what we accept for ourselves as circle members and people enrolled in this course:

- Respect for every person
- Listen when you don't have the talking piece
- Let people express their own truth
- Respect feelings and the courage it takes to express them
- Empathy
- No 'free-riders' on collective work projects
- Talk when you have the talking piece
- Don't argue, listen and hear what people have to say
- Remain non-judgmental and open minded
- Be kind to one another
- Consensus decision making – this does not require total agreement but does mean that everyone is willing to 'go along' with the group decision

Circle processes, including using a *talking piece* (i.e. a meaningful object signifying that the holder has the floor and others are expected to actively listen), facilitate a positive psychological climate because all participants are included and have equal opportunity to talk. The 'circle keeper' (initially the instructor) usually starts with a simple ceremony (e.g. a welcome and a relevant reading) which signifies that the circle is a special time and place. The first few dialogue sessions build relationships where people get to know one another as fellow students and as individuals. They typically start with unthreatening topics such as asking participants to share a happy memory or something unusual that recently happened to them and gradually move to more sensitive topics (e.g. a valuable lesson that was learned the 'hard way'). As the course progresses, students gain a deeper understanding of the meaning of victimization and offending from a restorative justice context, and these discussions often reveal experiences of victimization or feelings of shame related to some conduct earlier in their life. These lessons are often augmented by invited guests who visit the circle and tell their stories as victims, offenders or participants in restorative processes.

Online course

In the online course, discussions during the first couple of weeks invite collaboration on guidelines for 'netiquette' (i.e. norms and values associated with online interactions) and the structural elements of the course. These discussions are based on reading assignments that are sent out before the course begins so that everyone begins with a common set of RJ concepts. One author uses facilitated online discussions to identify preferred components of an ideal syllabus (i.e. desired course outcomes, assessments that students believe allow them to demonstrate skills and knowledge, etc.) and to solicit questions, concerns and topics of interest. The teacher's role is to propose a syllabus based on the students' contributions and comments. While concurrent discussions may be underway, expectations, timelines for participation and clear instructions must always be provided otherwise online students can become lost as they navigate the course.

The anonymity of an online course may encourage participants to share personal victimization or offending stories during introductory discussions about basic con-

cepts central to restorative justice. Regardless of modality, sharing personal stories humanizes participants to each other and invites recognition and support. The personal and institutional transformation suggested by restorative andragogy is not easy and conflicts may arise online. Reflective and considerate online interactions by some students tend to temper those from others who are less compassionate or tolerant of process-oriented experiential learning. Consistent with restorative practices in the justice setting, a facilitated online dialogue promotes compromise and collaborative solutions which may resolve these conflicts.

The early days of each online course are often very intense for the teacher who must provide constant feedback to students as they learn to express both cognitive and emotional needs clearly in writing, identify and resolve conflicts, make suggestions, and reinforce standards of online netiquette. Provoked by the initial reading assignments, students often share very personal stories under the cloak of relative anonymity conferred by the online environment. These thoughtful and honest stories are often very moving. Despite the apparent privacy of a statement written on a home computer miles away from other anonymous individuals, it still takes courage for students to reveal themselves this way, and the teacher must be present to the risk and emotionality this requires just as they would in a face to face facilitation. These episodes typically arise much earlier than one would expect in a face to face situation so teachers should be prepared to devote significant time and energy in the early days of the course. However, these exchanges model appropriate RJ interactions for participants and the investment ultimately allows the teacher to step back and let participants take more of a lead as they learn by example and become increasingly self-governing and self-directed.

In any online course there may be 'cruisers,' 'lurkers' and 'uncommitted' students. Such participants may have joined the class under the false belief that an online class is 'easier' or represents an opportunity to hold back and remain anonymous. 'Cruisers' are students who want to skate by in the course by doing the least amount of work possible to get a passing grade. 'Lurkers' are students who may log in and read but not post themselves, while 'uncommitted' students may represent any combination of these two categories as well as students who may have found themselves in a more difficult situation than they anticipated. These types of students may be responsive to an early encouraging email. When possible, early outreach by phone before the beginning of term may allow the teacher to identify reticence or reluctance among students. In addition, early discussion of the guidelines, expectations, and incentives for participation at the outset of the course provide additional clarity for all students. Teachers in online courses should be particularly engaged during the early days of a course so that cruisers, lurkers, uncommitted and non-attending students can be identified and encouraged immediately (even if such encouragement means suggesting dropping the class to avoid failure in this format). Often an exchange with this type of student reveals anxieties which can often be easily mentored to draw in these students.

Students who remain disengaged or marginally engaged in an online course often need an additional outreach phone call and perhaps firmer handling consistent with restorative principles. The teacher may reiterate agreements about participation, responsibilities to the learning community and impact on the class of their nonparticipation. One author views such conversations as a type of reintegrative shaming which allows agreements to be made between student and teacher about future participation. As in restorative justice, the community supports the latecomer and that

person learns firsthand that being at the center of an active community brings its own benefits. It may also be necessary to keep an eye on these students and provide periodic nudges and encouragement. It is possible to draw in cruisers, lurkers and uncommitted students, often much to their surprise. Students who are unresponsive to early proactive conversations with the teacher have the opportunity to discern whether the course is a good fit for them at this time. If it is not and they decide to withdrawn from or drop the course there should be no penalty and instructor should convey to them that they would be welcome to take the course again.

Hybrid course

The success of any RJ course depends heavily on the mix of students and the interaction between and among students and the instructor. The hybrid course appears to work best when one or several students 'get it' and encourage others to be vulnerable and question assumptions. Without at least one student willing to risk modeling vulnerability for others, any fear-based 'challenge' of the course, its structure or the instructional methods employed may be directed at the teacher. One author has had students attempt to build coalitions among students against the class and its methods. Conversely, other students in the same course have given the instructor unconditional support and encouragement. Quite like RJ itself, there is no one method that works with all students all the time – rather the process and participants must adapt to the community environment.

In their first non-confrontational community building exercise in a hybrid curse, students and professor may introduce themselves by sharing something about their work, academic standing (year of study) and something personal about ourselves that others would not know unless they shared it. This process of sharing something personal and nonacademic in an academic setting gradually builds trust among community members. It also begins to break the barrier between 'what you do' in a classroom and 'who you are.'

Two exercises used by one of the authors may be done early in the semester to help create a climate based on mutual respect, collaborative learning and acceptance. In one exercise, each student is given a paper plate and asked to write on it a deeply held personal value. In the circle, students are asked to share why that unique value is especially important. Generally, values like respect, inclusiveness, honor, trust, integrity and fairness emerge from early family or other personal experiences. Sometimes, this becomes emotional as students share how and why this value has become so important in their lives. After speaking, each individual puts his/her plate in the center of the circle to start building a foundation of core values for the class. The class may also consider the degree to which these are or are not present in our current justice system and what a system based on such values would look like.

In the second exercise, students are asked to bring their own talking pieces to class. The objects must be small non-fragile items of personal value and student must not mind having it handled by others. They are asked to share their talking piece with the class, explain why it is important and its significance. This exercise often evokes emotion as students may bring objects given to them by people who are now deceased, awards, or objects from home countries that they have left. As each student shares his or her talking piece and its significance, others learn more about the person outside of the classroom, and each piece is passed around with

reverence and honor. When the piece returns to its owner, that student is asked to place it in the center of the circle so that the whole learning community can honor what it represents. In this way, the class begins to come together as a community and members come to know one another as full human beings, not solely as students with whom they sit for a few hours a week.

The two exercises described above rarely occur without a student shedding tears as a part of his or her heart is opened. The instructor *must* be able to 'hold the space' and be present to manage such emotions in a safe and empathetic manner that reinforces the sense that this class is a safe place. When these types of exercises are managed well they begin to create an environment unlike that in any other classroom where students feel safe, able to express their own humanity and vulnerability while engaged in the learning process.

Principle 3: Involvement in planning, determining learning needs and assessment methods

Face-to-face course

This principle may be addressed by an instructor facilitated discussion to surface student interests and concerns about the content of the course. One strategy is for the instructor to define the general goals and initial learning objectives for the course and then allow student to refine those goals and objectives based on their own interests and concerns. It may help students to participate thoughtfully in a discussion of the course structure if they review the table of contents for assigned readings ahead of time. Such assignments help to refine course goals and objectives, and identify areas of interest. Table 2 presents the sequencing of areas of interest developed by students in a recent RJ course taught by one of the authors.

Although the sequence developed by the students was close to the logical sequence envisioned by the teacher, it was an expression of their logic and preferences and they owned the course.

In the same course, circle processes were used during two class periods to discuss grading and learning assessments. One of the most interesting elements was their decision to use small group projects to design and present role play scenarios

Table 2. Sequence of student areas of interest.

(1) Applications of RJ with adult offenders, juvenile offenders and victims:

   (a) How they get involved?
   (b) What's in it for them?

(2) Applications of RJ with violent crime offenses
(3) Applications of RJ with communities
(4) What is Restorative Justice (theory and practice)?
(5) What is Community Justice (theory and practice)?
(6) Guest Speakers

   (a) Returning offender(s)
   (b) Recovering victim(s)
   (c) Practitioner(s)

as a key assessment element. They required that each role play identify the harm, situation, characters and roles but not the outcomes so that they could emerge naturally during each role play.

Online only course

In an online course students may be engaged in course design discussions before the course starts. This allows students to express reservations about online courses, the participation required, and the collaborative nature of the course. It also affords the teacher an opportunity to work with students individually (online or offline) to provide reassurance, encouragement and clarification. During early interactions it is relatively easy to identify students who are struggling because they rarely or superficially respond. If this type of problem is not successfully addressed early, some of students will not post comments and their voices will be silent as the guidelines and structural components of the course are refined or defined. In an RJ course, it is important that all students feel that their voice is needed and has been heard; without some effort on the part of the teacher, some students may not fully participate. For these reasons the facilitator needs to reach out quickly by e-mail or phone to inquire about and address any problems. This may uncover technical issues such as internet connectivity problems, or emotional concerns such as fear of publically expressing thoughts online, poor writing skills, or lack of online learning experience. These issues can then be addressed with respectful brainstorming, coaching and honest communication that is privately and clearly expressed between the teacher/facilitator and the student. These types of processes help to ensure genuine student participation in the design and management of an online course. When discussion of the course design begins, brainstorming is a valuable technique to elicit ideas from students. One method is to use a clustering strategy where similar ideas are grouped and used in a draft syllabus which is reviewed and refined before being finalized. Students are usually amazed and excited to see their own ideas 'in print,' which minimizes any need for later conversations about their motivation and engagement. This respectful and inclusive endeavor models the agreement process in restorative encounters, which provides an early experience for students in restorative process.

Hybrid course

One of the most critical aspects of any course is learning assessment. Including students in developing or defining assessments can take several forms. Creative assessment strategies can be used in any modality but are particularly suited for a hybrid RJ course where discussions could be initiated in one modality and continued in another. For example, students could write and submit possible test questions electronically followed by a circle process to explore the viability of these questions; or have groups of students take responsibility for developing comprehensive study notes which are shared electronically with class members. A more complex strategy involves asking students to collectively determine how they want to be assessed and what would be the fairest strategy.[2] The important element is that they have chosen the outcome rather than having it imposed on them. This is not dissimilar from collaborative restorative agreements that include input from *all* participants – victims, offenders and community members.

Principle 4: Mutual responsibility for learning objectives, learning plans, learning assessment and classroom environment

Face-to-face course

The principle of 'mutual responsibility' refers to the means by which accountability is shared among all participants within a course. In face-to-face courses it is often useful to periodically devote circle time to 'checking-in'. In these circles, students are encouraged to bring issues, concerns or experiences with the course forward for class discussion. Alternatively, if anonymity is preferred, students could bring these issues and concerns to the instructor who could raise them for class discussion and decision-making. Either way, student willingness to speak out about the course and the quality of their classroom experience before classmates and the teacher is largely dependent on the trust, rapport and relationships developed during the early weeks of the course.

Online only course

Zull (2011) argues that students learn more when they take responsibility for their own learning and actively participate in the evaluation processes used. Online learning may attract more mature students with busy lives, and restorative justice classes often engage those in need of healing. As a result, restorative justice classes may include students interested in emotional healing as well as academic achievement. Private communication channels within computer based learning management systems (e.g. email, online journals, help links) allow these students to speak confidentially to the facilitator on matters they are uncomfortable raising in online discussions. The facilitator can then integrate these issues and concerns into facilitated discussions and decision-making by students.

Immediate access to course information and requirements is necessary for students to feel comfortable and trust the online course process. Unlike face-to-face classes and hybrids with regular class meetings and direct personal access to the professor, in the online course each student is entirely alone without a friendly face for reassurance or help. One solution is an online 'questions area' which is monitored by all class participants and students seeking assistance can receive moral support from one another as well as the teacher, minimizing the feeling of being alone in the course. In most cases, student concerns can be addressed in a timely and meaningful way by other students. A 'cybercafé' discussion space is usually not monitored by the teacher unless invited and can be provided for 'water cooler' conversations similar to those that might arise spontaneously among students outside class. These strategies support the social and personal needs of students for connection with others in the online environment and facilitate self-governance within the course.

Face to face exchanges are characterized by non-verbal as well as verbal reciprocity and recognition. Online environments require some adaptations to enable similar interactions. Two particularly important and related issues are timeliness and responsiveness. In real-time, face-to-face settings, a smile or a supportive comment can show students their efforts are recognized by their professors. It is not unusual for online facilitators to report spending more time than they would in a face-to-face class sending timely messages of recognition and affirmation to each student so that he or she feels 'seen' by the person evaluating them. These exchanges are

critically important in the creating an open, honest and safe environment for students to express important ideas and issues related to their lived experience as a student in the course and allows the teacher to make mid-course adjustments to address student interests, concerns and learning needs. Acknowledging key components of a student's message is a way to show that the teacher is attending to the student's comments in much the same way as eye contact, 'hmmm', 'ah', and head nodding do in face-to-face communications. Obviously, it is impossible for teachers to respond contingently to every student posting. However, using techniques such as summarizing or weaving (thematic analysis) of discussions in ways that acknowledge important contributions by each student (by name) are legitimate and effective ways of showing both affirmation and attention which are necessary to support and encourage personal risk-taking and experiential learning in students.

Hybrid course

In the hybrid course, as in face-to-face courses, real time 'check-in circles' can be systematically used to allow students to reflect on their experience. However, online 'check-in' discussions can also be conducted. Common questions relate to student's experiences to date – what they have learned, what has been missing for them, what they might like to see covered or any other issue they want to discuss. An advantage of a hybrid course is students' ability to reflect electronically when face-to-face discussion of 'feelings' may be difficult. Within course websites, there is usually a place for 'Frequently Asked Questions' where students can raise and share issues with all participants, as well as a discussion thread to express views and experiences related to the class and RJ. Students may also contribute to the style and -content of tests, reflect on upcoming assessments and assignments, give feedback about the class structure and express what has and has not worked for them. At the end of the course, students may be asked to critically consider the best and worst aspects of the class and what they will take with them from the course.

Caveats to employing restorative andragogy

Within the college classroom environment, the RJ teacher must maintain a delicate balance between sharing and relinquishing power. When done well, it can be very empowering for students; when done poorly, it can confuse or frustrate them. Sharing power requires facilitating and directing the class effectively while maintaining a degree of non-dominating control. Relinquishing power without providing structure or guidance may leave students unclear about class expectations, their role and, above all, what RJ is and why it works. Leading this class requires a unique kind of teacher who is not afraid to relinquish control, comfortable in the presence of emotion, committed to producing particular outcomes while being flexible on the processes used and provide structure and guidance without dominating students. In this context, the teacher's credibility is always at risk. Maintaining attitudes or decisions that are inconsistent with restorative justice theory or best practices in adult learning becomes quite obvious and may be seen by students as hypocritical (i.e. 'not walking the talk').

The style of many professors may be inherently dominating, even if unintended and students may be intrinsically intimidated by a professor based on prior academic experience. College level faculty members have many years of academic

training and teaching experience with instructor centered courses. This background and their professional personality may inadvertently (or intentionally) suppress honest expression by students. For these reasons, those teaching RJ should be well trained in restorative justice theory and practice, volunteer to teach the course, and capable of teaching in a style consistent with the principles of restorative andragogy.

Most students enter RJ classes with little knowledge about the topic. Consequently, meaningful participation in refining goals and objectives, identifying interests or defining course assessments may be challenging without an appropriate foundation. Providing students with a rudimentary foundation in RJ enables them to participate meaningfully in discussions about the structural elements of the course. Although sharing power and responsibility is important in restorative andragogy, it is appropriate for the teacher to begin with a basic course structure that can be refined by students. Adult students are usually experienced learners and capable of engaging in defining or refining elements of the course when they have a foundation and are invited into an open, honest and safe process where their voices and ideas are respected, and decisions are reached by consensus.

The quiet leadership role of the teacher is consistent with the facilitator role in RJ processes where they must carefully manage the process without dominating it, and help the dialogue move forward when participants seem 'stuck.' For example, when students consider learning objectives, the teacher may ask them to work in small groups to identify what they want to learn and bring those ideas back to the larger circle for discussion. Students may be asked to generate materials related to particular areas of interest and present what they learn to the class. A variation in hybrid and online courses would be to ask students to post reading materials, website links and news stories along with a discussion about the meaning and relevance of the posted material. In hybrid courses, such posts can be discussed face-to-face as well as online, and in face-to-face courses students can use email to distribute materials for later in-class discussion.

Skeptics of online teaching in higher education criticize the lack of face-to-face interaction and corresponding interpersonal relationships. In online courses, personal relationships must be fostered through conscious intention to inspire deep communication among participants to build the sense of community (Cozolino, 2006; Siegel & Hartzell, 2004). In fully or partially online courses, considerable attention must be given to course structure, expectations, and facilitation, including: direct, active and personal engagement of all participants; timeliness of instructor feedback; clarity of expectation; access to technical support; ease of website navigation; facilitation style of the teacher; teacher-to-student ratio; discussion board structure; fostering online conversations; and, using synchronous technologies to enhance relationships (Chaves, 2009; Palloff & Pratt, 2001).

In many ways, the 'hybrid classroom' may integrate the best of both worlds by including the physical interaction necessary to build direct personal connections while also allowing a degree of 'anonymity' or distance that helps people share personal information or unpopular ideas with others. However, a drawback of the hybrid environment can be less face-to-face contact time and some students may miss the direct interaction felt in a classroom setting or feel 'gypped' by not getting sufficient time with their peers and instructor. On the other hand, others may appreciate online classes which more easily accommodate competing demands of school, family, work and leisure.

Conclusions

The practice of restorative justice is about 'being with' rather than 'talking to' people – it is relational and shared with others. Similarly, effective teaching in a college level RJ course emulates the relational context of RJ in practice. Who we are as people – apart from our titles and roles – is relevant and essential for restorative dialogue. Each person's life experience is unique and deserves to be heard and understood in a safe, open, honest, respectful and empathetic environment. Developing the capacity to understand and create an environment conducive to restorative experiences requires different teaching strategies than are typical of traditional criminal justice classes. In this paper, we have suggested the development of a 'restorative andragogy' that addresses the needs of adult learners and relies on four principles that capture the critical and unique components of teaching RJ as distinct from other criminal justice courses. We have suggested that teaching RJ, like its practice, requires power sharing, including key stakeholders, flexibility of process, respect for participants and other value-driven elements that are not typically seen or taught in traditional justice classes. In addition, we have presented ideas for how such restorative andragogy can be delivered in face-to-face, online and hybrid course modalities.

Each RJ teaching modality has strengths and weaknesses. The face-to-face modality may be more amenable to community development, but some students may feel inhibited by the lack of anonymity in this setting. The perceived vulnerability this produces can impede the trust necessary to share sensitive aspects of their lives. Furthermore, sharing sensitive personal information requires the instructor to carefully manage emotional expressions with empathy, sensitivity and cultural understanding. In the hybrid modality, the commitment of students to one another and the class itself may be quite variable; and yet, the 'anonymity' of online communication may allow participants to more readily share personal information or reveal deeply hidden feelings and emotions. In online classes, students recognize that they are known only through their electronic communication and hence may be more open and responsive than in the other modalities. Since online students participate in a virtual community through the written word, they appear to make interactions as comprehensive as possible, perhaps to avoid being misunderstood. In addition, every student's voice can be 'heard', consistent with true circle processes. Asynchronous technology makes it possible for learning experiences to occur without the constraints of time and space, which cannot be replicated in real time environments. This is a distinct advantage for more reflective learners, and for those whose grasp on English may inhibit joining in real-time classroom discussions. However, for loquacious students, online environments can be frustratingly short on the immediate feedback experienced in synchronous classes. In the hybrid environment, the quality of online interaction may be mediated by knowledge that miscommunication can be clarified; or, that inadequate online participation can be ameliorated by being active and engaged in the classroom.

RJ courses in higher education can be effectively presented using any of the three modalities discussed in this paper. What makes any restorative justice intervention 'restorative' is adherence to a common set of core principles (Choi & Gilbert, 2010). Similarly, we would argue that effective RJ courses must adhere not just to restorative justice principles, but also to those of adult learning, which we contend results in 'restorative andragogy.' Just as the practice of RJ relies on

relationship building, it is also at the heart of effective RJ learning experiences. Whether students are willing to go beyond the limitations they have come to believe are appropriate in academic settings and risk being vulnerable in the presence of others depends on the rapport and trust developed among participants. This requires a much different set of teaching skills and strategies than are commonly applied by faculty members delivering conceptual content to passive students in an instructor centered course.

Teaching restorative justice *is different*. Application of the principles of restorative andragogy described in this paper provides a useful framework for effective teaching in RJ courses where students not only learn about RJ, but also experience it through the structure and design of the course and its activities.

Notes

1. Facilitated dialogue in the restorative justice context refers to the use of a neutral mediator to prepare, structure, and guide face-to-face interactions between victims and offenders in ways that avoid revictimization of those harmed, promote reparation of the harms caused, strengthen pro-social human relationships and provide an opportunity for offenders to earn redemption and return to the community as constructive citizens.
2. Asking students to determine how they will be assessed is an interesting process. It allows students to work together and come up with a satisfactory solution. However, in one author's experience, this often ends with students deciding that the instructor should develop and deliver a test in traditional format.

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